



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Eagle Zinc Risk Assessment Near Completion

Eagle Zinc Site

Waukegan, Illinois

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the companies held responsible for the pollution are now in the process of studying the health risks of the chemicals found in the soil sampling done at the Eagle Zinc Superfund Site. This fact sheet is an update for the Hillsboro community members and other interested parties on the latest developments regarding cleanup of the site.

Work Completed

Phase 1 activities were completed in July 2002. These included the taking of 130 soil borings including soil from the main manufacturing area. Phase 1 also included sampling of on and off-site sediment including the zinc oxide piles found on the plant site. These piles were thoroughly tested to determine if they had the potential to leak contaminants to the groundwater, which is the name for underground supplies of fresh water. The soil and sediment samples were tested for metals and organic compounds.

Phase 2 sampling tested the pathway of the water that could be spreading the contamination. It involved locating the groundwater wells and measuring water levels in on-site ponds. This phase included the installation of several monitoring wells and gauges to measure groundwater contaminants and additional testing of the residue piles from phase 1. This second phase was completed in March 2003.

Next Steps

The responsible companies are currently completing a risk assessment. This is when the sample results are used to calculate health and environmental risks present at the site. This process is anticipated to be completed by the end of this summer. The results of the this assessment will be put into a remedial investigation report which will be available for public review.

Once the report is done, a Feasibility Study will follow. This study will address any risks that exceed EPA's acceptable levels. It will be used by EPA to make a decision on how to remedy the pollution problem.

The public will be invited to comment on the feasibility study and EPA's proposed remedy in a meeting, which is anticipated spring 2005.



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EAGLE ZINC SITE: Eagle Zinc Risk Assessment Near Completion

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Background information

Between 1919 and 1980, the site was owned by Eagle-Picher Industries. In 1980 it was purchased by Sherwin-Williams Co., which owned the site from until 1984. The current owner, T.L. Diamond and Co. Inc., operated the site from 1984 until it closed in 2003.

Since 1919, the main manufacturing operation at the site was the zinc oxide smelting process. The white powdery Zinc Oxide residue from this process has been stored on the site in piles. There are approximately 15 piles.

Sampling of the sediment was conducted by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The results showed higher than normal levels of zinc, lead, cadmium, and arsenic, which are defined as hazardous substances.

In December 2001, EPA signed a consent order with T.L. Diamond, Sherwin-Williams, and Eagle-Picher. This agreement was part of EPA's Superfund site investigation process which holds present and past owners of a site responsible in its cleanup. The agreement says that T.L. Diamond and Sherwin-Williams will prepare a remedial investigation and feasibility study report. Eagle-Picher's contribution to the investigation will be strictly financial. The Remedial Investigation will assess the nature and extent of the contamination and any threat to public health or the environment. This was the two-phase sampling project completed in 2003.

Information Repository

Anyone interested in more information about the Eagle Zinc Superfund site is encouraged to review the documents available at the site information repository:

Hillsboro Public Library
214 School St.